

May 02, 2018 16:44 BST

Eight and a half million leisure trips planned this spring bank holiday

With the early Easter break a distant memory, drivers look set to make the most of the upcoming long weekend with at least 8.5 million leisure trips by car planned, according to new research of motorists' travel plans conducted by the RAC.*

Drivers keen to make a dash on Friday May 4th will be hoping that the 'fourth will be with them' as regular commuter traffic also vies for space on the nation's congested roads. In total, around 2.9m trips are planned for that day with the majority of these likely to be condensed into the afternoon and into the evening rush hour. Saturday looks to be the next busiest day with around 2.5m leisure trips scheduled, followed by bank holiday Monday itself with 1.9m.

But the real numbers of cars on the road could turn out to be millions more depending on what the weather has in store. It looks like many of us will see warmer and more settled conditions for much of the bank holiday weekend, and increased sunshine levels will doubtless tempt many more of us to jump in the car to enjoy a day trip or short break away. Coastal regions, and the major roads that lead to them, are likely to see some of the largest increases in traffic.

	Planned leisure journeys by car	Expected busiest times on the road
Friday May 4th	2.86 million	4pm to 7pm
Saturday May 5th	2.54 million	10am to 4pm
Sunday May 6th	1.27 million	10am to 4pm

Monday May 7th	1.91 million	12pm to 4pm
<i>Planning a trip between 1st and 9th May, but no date set yet</i>	<i>4.45 million</i>	

RAC traffic spokesman Rod Dennis said: “While wall-to-wall sunshine might not be on the cards for everyone this bank holiday weekend, many will still be keen to make the most of the early May warmth by escaping in the car to spend time with family or friends – especially after the recent chilly spell that even lead to some overnight frosts at the start of this week.

“While motorists have told us about their firm travel plans as part of our research, if we see things really warm up by the weekend it’s likely to mean millions more cars on the road, which is bound to cause queues on popular routes.

“We urge all drivers to give their cars a quick once over before they set off, especially if they are planning on driving any great distance. Spending just a few moments checking things like the oil and coolant levels, together with tyre pressure and condition, could save hours stuck at the side of the road while everyone else enjoys the long weekend.”

Chris Bulmer, Deputy Chief Meteorologist at the Met Office said: “Not everyone will see continuous sunshine this Bank Holiday weekend, however, it’s looking like a most of us will get to see some warm sun at times. Parts of Scotland and perhaps Northern Ireland will occasionally be cloudy with some rain, mainly in the west.

“The best of the sunshine and the highest temperatures this weekend are expected across England and Wales away from the coast. For Bank Holiday Monday itself it is possible that temperatures could be near record-breaking. We’ll keep you updated with the details over the next few days.”

The RAC website has [comprehensive advice](#) to drivers on how to reduce the chances of a vehicle breakdown. Highways England, together with THINK!, is also running [a campaign](#) on the importance of conducting ‘pre-drive checks’.

Notes to Editors

* Based on research conducted for the RAC by Ragdoll during w/c 23 April 2018 with 2,579 UK motorists. Daily traffic volumes extrapolated from 31.79m licensed cars. Respondents were asked on which dates they would be using a car to travel on major A roads or motorways in order to get away on a leisure trip/visit family and friends, or return from such a trip (i.e. not travelling for the purposes of work). 4.45m drivers reported they were confident they will be using the car for a leisure trip but had not pinned down a specific day yet.

About the RAC

First formed in 1897, the RAC has been looking after the needs of its members and championing the interests of motorists for more than 120 years.

Today it has more than eight million members and is one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it's [roadside assistance](#), [insurance](#), [buying a used car](#), [vehicle inspections and checks](#), [legal services](#) or up-to-the-minute [traffic and travel information](#) – the RAC offers a solution for all motoring needs. The RAC is committed to making motoring easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for drivers and road users.

The RAC is the motorist's champion and campaigns to support the interests of its members and UK motorists at a national level. This includes voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring, particularly the price of fuel and the high level of tax levied on it, advancing levels of road safety, and supporting the needs of all drivers, from young to old.

The RAC's annual [Report on Motoring](#) – first published in 1989 – is one of a kind and provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices, check [RAC Fuel Watch](#). It provides a comprehensive guide to the latest UK unleaded petrol and diesel prices – both at the wholesale level and at the pump - and tracks these prices daily to help drivers check if the price they pay to fill up is a fair one.

Contacts



RAC Press Office

Press Contact

press.office@rac.co.uk

Emails monitored during normal office hours. For breakdown queries, call 0330 159 0740

ISDN number on request